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Viewing cable 05PORTAUPRINCE2945, HAITI ELECTIONS: POLITICAL PARTY LANDSCAPE

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
05PORTAUPRINCE2945	2005-11-30 17:34	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Port Au Prince

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 PORT AU PRINCE 002945

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA AND USOAS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/12/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: HAITI ELECTIONS: POLITICAL PARTY LANDSCAPE

REF: A. PAP 2412

[1](#)B. 04 PAP 1874

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i., Erna Kerst for Reasons: 1.4 (b and d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) Introduction: The Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) officially sanctioned 45 parties to participate in upcoming elections. Traditionally, most, if not all, of the political parties have been vehicles to catapult an individual into the office of the presidency. Larger, more established, parties such as OPL and Fusion of Social Democrats (Fusion) are running candidates at all levels. However, TetAnsann, MOCHRENHA, UNION Pour Haiti (MIDH/Lavalas), RDNP, Alyans (KID/PPRH), and relative newcomers FRN, JPDN, MPH, MODEREH, KOMBA, and L'Espwa are also running several candidates in a majority of the races. The remainder of the 45 CEP-approved parties are concentrating on certain seats where they have regional presence. This message provides capsule summaries of the most important political parties, updating ref B. End Summary.

On the Left

[1](#)3. (U) Struggling People's Organization (OPL): OPL was originally Lavalas Political Organization, but changed its name when Aristide broke from the party in 1994 and created Fanmi Lavalas. The party has a strong national structure throughout Haiti. Its doctrinaire socialist orientation is a legacy of the late Gerard-Pierre Charles, the party's founder, who became a committed communist while exiled in Mexico during the Duvalier era.

Key Leaders:

Paul Denis (presidential candidate)
Edgar LeBlanc, Jr. (Secretary General, senatorial
candidate-Nippes)
Rosny Smarth (National Executive, former PM)
Suzy Castor (National Executive)

14. (SBU) Fusion Party of Social Democrats (FUSION): Fusion formed following a successful merger of smaller parties PANPRA, KONAKOM and Ayiti Kapab in April 2005. OPL and TetAnsanm, both included in the original talks regarding the merger, opted out due to differences in the proposed power-sharing structure (OPL, the largest of the parties involved wanted more influence) and over presidential aspirations of the leadership. According to the party's president, FUSION is represented in 24 of the 30 senatorial races and 84 of the 99 deputy races. The party's president told the Charge November 22 that Fusion is looking to control both houses. He said that if the party could not win a majority, it would work to create a bloc within parliament to work with the president (regardless of the president's party). Benoit had earlier told Poloff November 4 that if the Fusion presidential candidate wins and Fusion has a majority, the party would still have a representative cabinet, offering "5 ministers out of 15" to other parties.

Key Leaders:

Serge Gilles (presidential candidate)
Victor Benoit (President of party)
Robert Auguste (Secretary General)
Micha Gaillard (spokesperson)

15. (U) Union Pour Haiti (UNION): A formal alliance between center-right party MIDH (Movement to Introduce Democracy in Haiti) and the Fanmi Lavalas leadership. Standard bearer Marc Bazin has worked hard to cultivate the Lavalas masses who supported former president Aristide. Bazin is the ultimate survivor of Haitian politics; he served in each successive government beginning with Jean-Claude Duvalier.

Key Leaders:

Marc Bazin (presidential candidate)
Leslie Voltaire (campaign manager)
Ivon Feuille (senatorial candidate-South)

16. (SBU) Democratic Alliance (Alyans): A formal alliance between populist party Democratic Unity Committee (KID) and the Popular Party for the Renewal of Haiti (PPRH). The party is centered around well-known politician Evans Paul (aka K-Plim, his pseudonym from a radio program in which he told children's stories). Paul, a former mayor of Port-au-Prince, is extremely popular in the capital, but less so in the provinces. Alyans continues to pursue strategic alliances and has been in contact with OPL, Fusion and to a lesser extent PNDPH.

Key Leaders:

Evans Paul (presidential candidate)
Claude Roumain (PPRH national coordinator)

On the Right

17. (SBU) National Assembly of Progressive Democrats (RDNP): This is perhaps founder and former president Leslie Manigat's last run for the presidency. RDNP has a strong party infrastructure, however, Manigat's unrelenting hold on the reins of leadership has limited the party's growth.

Key Leaders:

Leslie Manigat (presidential candidate, former President)
Myrlande Manigat (Leslie's spouse and campaign manager; senatorial candidate-West)

18. (U) Christian Movement for a New Haiti (MOCHRENHA): Protestant party with regional strength in Gonaives (hometown of the party's founder) and throughout the Artibonite and Central Plateau. Over one thousand supporters crowded a downtown Port-au-Prince basketball gymnasium for MOCHRENHA's October 8 campaign launch. Presidential candidate Luc Mesadieu promised a university in each of the Haiti's ten Departments, increasing the Haitian National Police to 20,000 and bringing back the armed forces of Haiti. This last promise drew the loudest applause. Axan Abellard, of REPONSE, and rejected presidential candidate Osner Fevry (PDCH-II) each spoke in support of Mesadieu's candidacy.

Key Leaders:

Luc Mesadieu (presidential candidate)
Sylvio Dieudonne (senatorial candidate-West)

19. (C) Heads Together (Tet Ansanm Originally a regional party with strength in the South, Tet Ansanm gained national notoriety after choosing Haitian-American businessman Dumas Simeus as its presidential candidate. The CEP opted to leave his name off the list of final presidential candidates due to the Nationalities Commission's findings (and ignoring an earlier Haitian supreme court ruling in Simeus' favor) that

he holds an American passport. The party is fielding candidates across the board nationally and may form a significant bloc within parliament. The secretary general, a doctor by training and former Aristide Health Minister, likely stifled his own presidential ambitions for a chance at becoming prime minister.

Key Leaders:

Dumarsais Simeus (disputed presidential candidate)
Gerard Blot (Secretary General)

New Comers

10. (SBU) Platform for Hope (L'Espwa/L'Espoir): Left-leaning political alliance between ESKAMP (Solidarity to Construct a Popular Alternative), PLB (Open the Gate Party) and KOREGA, a peasants civic organization. The party appears to be strong in the South, Southeast and Grand Anse departments and some cities in the north (ref A). Despite being new on the scene, the party's presidential candidate, former president Rene Preval, appears to be the favorite in the presidential race. Other parties fear that Preval is strong enough to avoid a second round and some have called for parties to consider coalescing around a consensus candidate to challenge the former president (septel). A November 3 march of 3000 Preval supporters was tarnished by some who engaged in minor violence, robbery and vandalism along the route.

Key Leaders:

Rene Preval (presidential candidate; former President)
Bob Manuel (campaign manager, former State Secretary for Public Security)
Joseph Jasme (ESKAMP)

11. (SBU) Committee to Build Haiti KOMBA: The left-leaning Kombit Pour Bati Ayiti ("Combat") was co-founded in February 2005 by Aristide's Minister of Youth and Sports and a leader of the large rural organization, Mouvement des Paysans de Papaye (MPP, Papaya Peasants Movement). Its strong rural backing makes KOMBA a force to contend with in this year's elections. When the party was founded, many believed it would be the vehicle for former president Rene Preval to launch a bid to reclaim the presidency. To the contrary, however, KOMBA's leadership launched tirades against Preval. Media reported September 30 that KOMBA will back the candidacy of independent Charlito Baker. Baker introduced MPP founder and KOMBA co-founder Jean-Baptiste to the Charge November 22 as Charlito's campaign manager.

Key Leaders:

Evans Lescouflair
Chavannes Jean-Baptiste (MPP)

12. (C) Mobilization for Haiti's Progress (MPH): Centrist party founded in November 2004 by Haitian-American and presidential candidate Samir Mourra. Mourra failed to make it onto the final presidential ballot due to his U.S. citizenship. Mourra has pursued the same legal strategy as Dumas Simeus and challenged the ruling before the Supreme Court. The case, pending before the court for over two weeks, is now in perpetual limbo due to the natural death of a supreme court justice November 27 (preventing the court from reaching a quorum and the ability to render a decision on the case). Mourra considers the CEP "corrupt" and alleged interim Prime Minister Latortue played a personal role in the decision to remove Dumas Simeus from the ballot (thereby affecting his own candidacy). Mourra said he would fully support the international community running the elections on behalf of the CEP. MPH is fielding 16 senatorial candidates and 77 deputy candidates. Mourra claims to be self-financing his campaign and the "4000" (including municipal) candidacies of his party. He told PolOff that he has spent more than \$500,000 USD (Note: Mourra runs a mortgage company in Miami Lakes where his family still resides. End Note). MPH's philosophy is economics-based and looks to create jobs by concentrating national production on agriculture and attracting foreign direct investment.

Key Leaders:

Samir Mourra (presidential candidate)
Chrisler Elmira (campaign manager)
Herve Leveille (party vice president)

13. (U) Justice for Peace and National Development (JPDN): Right of center party founded earlier this year by a former Finance Minister who was previously head of the Port-au-Prince bar association. The party was a merger of three smaller defunct parties and 23 civic organizations. The party is actively pro-FADH (former Haitian military).

Key Leader:

Rigaud Duplan (presidential candidate)

14. (SBU) The Front for National Reconstruction (FRN): A

FRN publication states the party's main objective is to "contribute to the creation of a modern, developed state, respectful of a democratic order..." FRN is likely to win some seats in local and parliamentary elections, particularly in Gonaives. Guy Phillipe, in the news repeatedly since early last year for his involvement in the events leading up to Aristide's downfall, announced his presidential candidacy on July 4, 2005. For most of the past year, Phillipe has been sounding more moderate in an attempt to erase the image of him as a rebel leader. He applauded the stepped-up vigilance of MINUSTAH and was included amongst political party leaders that met with the UN Security Council here in April. A FRN senatorial candidate once told PolOffs "our economics is on the right; our social policy is on the left."

Key Leaders:

Guy Phillipe (presidential candidate)
Winter Etienne (spokesperson; senatorial candidate-Artibonite)
Goodwork Noel (National Executive, member of Preliminary National Dialogue Committee)

15. (C) Artibonite in Action (LAAA): This party was founded earlier this year and is based in Gonaives. It is only running candidates in the Artibonite region, the most notable being the interim prime minister's nephew who is running for senate. This party may have nefarious sources of income and has already been implicated in gang-related violence in the poorer neighborhoods of Raboteau and Jubilee in Gonaives.

Key Leader:

Youri Latortue (senatorial candidate)

16. (U) For Us All (PONT): An off-shoot of Fanmi Lavalas. The party was founded in Jacmel and has limited reach beyond the South.

Key Leader:

Jean-Marie Cherestal (presidential candidate, former PM)
KERST